

Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Clowns, jugglers, others flock to festival

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Amid the constant sound of popping balloons, would-be jugglers and people in bright clown makeup filled the halls of Ridgecrest Church, Madison, on March 23-24 for the 2001 Mississippi Baptist Christian Performing Arts Festival.

More than 514 people attended the annual event sponsored by the Discipleship and Family Ministry (DFM)

Ellis said the recreation classes were also well-attended.

"The recreation classes are where people can get ideas for Backyard Bible Clubs, Vacation Bible School, mission trips, and other activities they will be conducting over the upcoming summer," he explained.

"The Christian Performing Arts Festival is instrumental in helping churches in clowning, multimedia, puppets, recreation, drama, and youth ministry. Helping more than

of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville.

• Vicki Roberts, a member of Alta Woods Church, Jackson.

Ellis said a critical evaluation of the 2001 Mississippi Baptist Performing Arts Festival will take place over the next several weeks.

Ellis invites Mississippi Baptists to make suggestions for future festivals by contacting him at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3286 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 286.

E-mail: hgelis@mbcb.org.

The 2002 Mississippi Baptist Christian Performing Arts Festival will be held April 5-6, 2002, at Country Woods Church, Jackson.



A LITTLE TWIST — Keith Burchfield (right), a member of Fairview Church, Columbus, directs Josh Perry of Janice Church, Brooklyn, in the making of a balloon sword during the 2001 Mississippi Baptist Performing Arts Festival on March 24 at Ridgecrest Church, Madison. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



CONSTRUCTION ZONE — Martha Cannon (standing), a member of Calvary Church, Batesville, utilizes a hair dryer on one of the internal parts used in the construction of rod puppets. Cannon was an instructor for the 2001 Mississippi Baptist Performing Arts Festival on March 24 at Ridgecrest Church, Madison. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

500 Mississippi Baptists strengthen these ministries each year through the festival is the goal of DFM," said Marcus Peagler, DFM department director.

"The combination of these ministries into the overall worship time is always a highlight of the festival. For Mississippi Baptists to be a part of worship where these ministries are incorporated is both inspiring and challenging.

"Our people leave enthused and ready to lead out in their own churches," Peagler said.

Ellis commended the festival planning committee for their hard work in putting

together the 2001 version of the event.

In addition to Ellis, the committee included:

• Susan Clark, bivocational minister of music at Paul Truitt Church, Pearl, and consultant in the MBCB Church Music Department.

• Martha Cannon, a member of Calvary Church, Batesville.

• Bobby Everett, a member of Parkway Church, Clinton.

• Myrna Gregory, a member of Pine Lake Church, Brandon, and recreation consultant for LifeWay Baptist Performing Arts Festival on March 24 at Ridgecrest Church, Madison. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



START WITH ONE — Leo Howard (left), a member of Russell Church, Meridian, teaches students the beginning steps of juggling at the 2001 Mississippi Baptist Performing Arts Festival on March 24 at Ridgecrest Church, Madison. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

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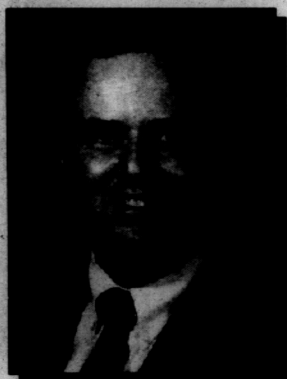
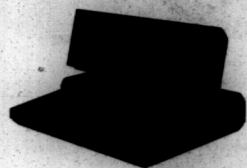
and Church Music Departments of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), and funded by gifts to the Cooperative Program.

"We had around 515 people last year, so we were pleased that attendance at the festival is holding steady," said Harvey Ellis, DFM consultant and festival coordinator.

There were more than 100 different training options spread out over five class times for Baptists who wanted to know more about how to use the performing arts to reach people with the Gospel, Ellis pointed out.

"There were training opportunities in youth ministry, drama, recreation, puppets, clowning, and multimedia. My perception is that the drama and puppet classes attracted the largest number of participants," he said.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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The source for informed decisions

It was a sensational story of homosexuality, brutality, and a young man's murder. It included grieving parents, determined law enforcement officers, dedicated prosecutors, and a riveting but stomach-turning trial in open court. Conviction for the horrendous crime was understandably as merciless as the homicide itself. Justice was served.

No, this is not the 1998 story of Matthew Shepard, the young Wyoming homosexual who was beaten and left to die while tied to a fence post. This is the story of Jason Dirkhising, a 13-year-old Arkansas boy who was abducted, raped, tortured, and killed in 1999 by a pair of sadistic homosexual predators searching for a pedophilic thrill.

What these two perverts inflicted on Dirkhising simply cannot be described on these pages; suffice to say that Jason died after more than five terrifying hours of the most humiliating and painful personal violations that can be imagined.

While the tragic and unjustified murder of Shepard made national news for months, one could have easily missed the coverage of Dirkhising's death and the conviction two weeks ago of one of his torturers.

That's because no mention of the Dirkhising case has ever been made on NBC, CBS, and ABC, CNN, or in The New York Times, The Washington Post, or USA Today. Outside of a few Arkansas newspapers, Dirkhising's story has gone virtually unreported.

The news media's inarguable malfeasance in failing to cover the Dirkhising story with the same fervor as the Shepard story is just the latest example of how the nation's most prominent television and print news outlets slant the news to further certain social and political aims.

When one of their favored groups is mistreated, it's national news. When one of their favored groups is the violator, however, they avert their eyes.

When it comes to the area of politics, the news media are even worse. Take the State

of Arizona, for example, which is almost completely dominated by female office holders including:

- Governor Jane Dee Hull.
- Attorney General Janet Napolitano.
- Secretary of State Betsey Bayless.
- Treasurer Carol Springer.
- Superintendent of Public Instruction Lisa Graham Keegan.

In addition, four of the top six posts in the state legislature are held by women, including majority leader and majority whip.

Now, one could surmise from the news media's decades-long, fawning promotion of all matters related to the feminist agenda that reporters would be all over this story, describing how these strong women broke through the "glass ceiling" and rightfully asserted themselves in a field heretofore known as the domain of men.

Not so, and there is an apparent reason for this intellectual and professional lapse on the part of the national news media. With the exception of Napolitano, all the female office holders are conservative Republicans.

As such, they are marginalized by the news media elite. They simply don't fit the elitist's qualifications for female leadership (pro-abortion, religion-neutral, pro-gun control, and euthanasia supporters, to name only a few requirements).

If the news media elite are for a cause, that cause can do no wrong. If they're against a

**"WHEN I GROW UP, DO I HAVE
TO BECOME A RIGHT-WING
CONSPIRATOR OR AN ENVIRON-
MENTALIST WACKO? AREN'T
THERE ANY OTHER CHOICES?"**



cause, however, that cause can do no right.

The moral of this sorry tale is that no one should depend on the untrustworthy U.S. (and international) news media for complete, unbiased coverage that would lead us to make informed decisions. That is especially true for Christians.

There's nothing wrong with keeping up with what's going on in our world through the secular news media, but Christians have the ultimate source for making informed decisions — the Bible.

In the overwhelming rush of our intense information culture let's not forget that simple fact.

GUEST OPINION:

Bring back public reading of Scripture

By W. Franklin Lay, pastor
Springfield Church, Morton

I am deeply disturbed by a trend that I have seen in Southern Baptist churches across our state. The trend is the tremendous neglect of the public reading of Scripture during our times of worship.

We Baptists have always claimed to be a "people of the Book." We who have even fought battles over the Bible, sadly neglect its reading in our worship services. More Scripture reading can be found in the liturgical churches than in a typical Southern Baptist church.

What is the basis for this observation? During our years as missionaries with the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, my wife and I had the opportunity of speaking in more than 200 different churches from Corinth to the Coast as we shared about missions.

Moreover, we had the opportunity of attending worship services in many different churches across our state. I have observed that few of our churches give serious attention to the public reading of Scripture.

Make a collection of different church bulletins and see if this is true. Better yet, examine your

own church bulletin for several weeks to see if your church is neglecting the public reading of the Word of God.

To be sure, most pastors will read a Scripture passage in connection with their sermon. Yet, I visited one Baptist church where there was not one verse of Scripture read during the entire service. The pastor never even referred to the Bible during his sermon.

From my personal observations, approximately 80-90% of our churches have no place for Bible reading apart from the sermon. This trend must change. We who believe the Bible must return Bible reading to its rightful place in our churches.

Why is there such a neglect

of Scripture reading in our Baptist churches? Have the prophet Amos' words come to pass? Are we in the midst of "a famine of hearing the words of the Lord" (Amos 8:11)?

Perhaps we try to put so much into our worship services that we have to let something go — so we set aside the reading of the Word of God. It would be better to have less special music, or fewer announcements, and more Bible reading. The public reading of Scripture is a Biblical mandate.

Our Lord Jesus set the example for us as he participated in the public reading of Scripture in his local synagogue in Nazareth: "As was his custom, he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read" (Luke 4:16).

Moreover, Paul instructed Timothy regarding the public reading of Scripture. He wrote, "Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching, and to teaching" (1 Tim. 4:13).

We preachers don't mind the preaching and teaching, but all too often we neglect reading of the Word.

Even a recent Southern Baptist publication presented several models for worship that included no mention of Scripture reading at all during the suggested orders of service.

The public reading of Scripture is one of the most important things we can do during worship. Because the reading of the Bible is an act of worship, the one who reads should practice aloud prior to reading in public.

My plea is this: let us set apart a time for the reading of the Word of God in our worship. We need to restore the Bible to its rightful place in our churches once again.

Let us give the Holy Spirit the opportunity of speaking to us through the public reading of the inspired Word of God.

Christian family escapes Sudan cruelties

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP) — He was a slave — ripped from his family, severely beaten, forced to live like an animal.

Rol Deng knows about persecution, and he wants American Christians to know and to pray about their fellow believers in Sudan who are being killed or sold into slavery because of their faith.

"We are dying for Christ," Deng said. "Jesus Christ died for us, and that is why we are dying. We need Christian brothers to find a way to unify to help Sudan. Pray for us."

Deng, who with his family now lives in Kansas City, said his war-torn homeland of Sudan is ruled by Muslims who oppose Christianity.

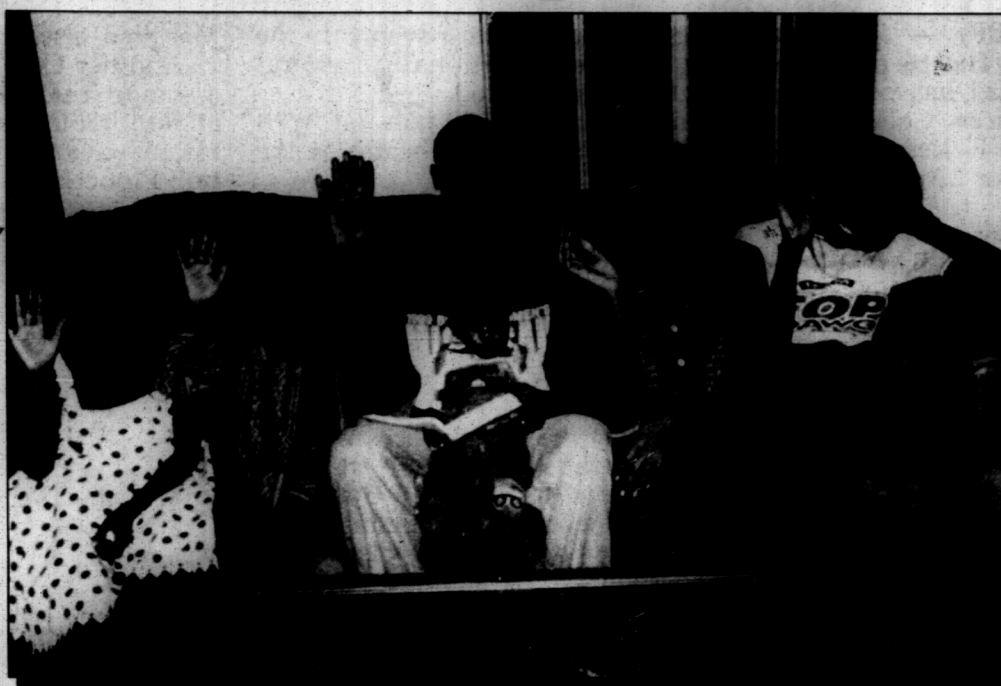
"There is no work unless you are Muslim," he said. "The government keeps track. They want to send you to religious training to be Muslim. If you say no, then there is no job."

Civil war has been raging in Sudan since 1983. More than two million people have died during the war, which pits Arabs in the north against Africans in the south. Tensions are rooted in attempts to impose Islamic values on all Sudanese people.

The U.S. Committee for Refugees reports that an estimated 300 Sudanese die each day of war-related causes, including disease and famine.

For Rol Deng, life forever changed one day in 1990. The government sent militia to his village of Arkeyna. Before they left, the whole village was burned and his father was killed.

Deng, his sister, his mother, and three brothers were taken as slaves. A scar running up the



PERSECUTION VICTIMS — Rol Deng (center) and his family endured persecution and torture in Sudan before fleeing the country and making their way to Kansas City. (BP photo)

side of his leg is a reminder of the beating he endured that day.

In anguish, Deng was forced to ride a camel with other village survivors after the town was razed. That day was the last time he saw his mother and his brothers.

His sister, Ayal, a toddler, stayed with him. For the next two years, he was forced at gunpoint to care for cows in the middle of a field, the climate cold and rainy.

"I had to sleep with the cows. I had no blanket. I ate with the dog. I lived like an animal for two years."

Eventually, Deng and Ayal escaped their captors by following railroad tracks. Heading north to avoid an increased militia presence in the south, they went in search of a city.

When they came to Babanis, they hurried into a church, looking for help. The preacher

there told them not to leave. He hid them until he secured tickets to Khartoum and some money for the two.

From 1992-96, Deng and Ayal lived as outcasts outside Khartoum in an area for displaced people. While there, he learned English. Also, it was during this time that Deng met and married Adut.

With only a cardboard shelter to sleep under and the food being designated for Muslims, Deng grew weary of not being able to provide for his family. He knew Christians were forbidden to go into Khartoum, but he was desperate to find work.

While traveling on the road, he was arrested by security forces. The plan was to train him for three months to be a soldier, and then he would be forced to fight.

"I couldn't do that," Deng said. "I couldn't kill my own people."

He escaped and returned to his family, but that was only a temporary solution. He knew he would be found and killed.

The only thing to do was to try to escape to Egypt. Through contact with a relative who worked for the government, Deng, Ayal, Adut, and their

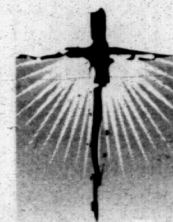
daughter Adeng were able to secure money for immigration.

Then, with the help of a security officer who was a secret Christian, they were taken to a boat in the middle of the night. They traveled by boat and then by train to their destination.

The officer, who risked his life to save theirs, directed them to the boat and asked them not to look back at him, or ever to mention his name.

Deng found factory work in Abbiasa, Egypt, a place that was friendly to the refugees, but it was difficult to earn enough to support his family, which now included a son, Dut, and another daughter, Amou.

With assistance from the Red Cross, the family came to the United States as refugees on July 21, 2000. The Dengs, along with fellow Sudanese Christians in the Kansas City area, worship in their native language of Dinka at a Nazarene church.



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THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE

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"It is hard to believe that slavery exists in this day and age. In our country, we fight for guns and drugs and money. Over there, they fight for their faith," said Joseph Resendiz, an internist at Samuel U. Rodgers Community Health Center in Kansas City.

Resendiz sees a large number of Sudanese patients in his medical practice.

Editor's note: For more information about Sudan, contact Samaritan's Purse at (828) 262-1980; Christian Solidarity International, toll-free (888) 676-5700; or Freedom House, (202) 296-5101. Their websites are www.csi-int.ch and www.freedomhouse.org.

Sudan action urged

WASHINGTON (BP) — Voices inside and outside Congress are calling for the United States government to intensify its efforts to end the civil war and religious persecution in Sudan. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom and U.S. House of Representatives Majority Leader Dick Armey recently called separately for the federal government to mount a strengthened campaign to pressure the militant Islamic regime in Khartoum to alter its policies. The 18-year civil war in the east African country has resulted in about two million deaths and the displacement of more than four million people. The Islamic regime's campaign of terror, which includes slave raids and the bombing of hospitals, has primarily been aimed at Christian and animist villages in central and southern Sudan. "Ending the war in Sudan should be a focus of U.S. foreign policy," Armey said in a March 22 news conference, according to a release from the majority leader's office. In making a series of recommendations, the commission, which was established by legislation in 1998, reiterated its description of Sudan as "the world's most violent abuser of the right to freedom of religion and belief." In a report issued last May, the commission proposed a year-long plan to influence the Sudanese government. The U.S. government's actions since then, "while mixed, have not been commensurate with the appalling violations of religious freedom and other human rights" by Khartoum, the commission said March 21. President Clinton "did not adequately employ the 'bully pulpit' of his office to inform the American public or enlist international opposition" to Sudan's crimes, the panel said.

Looking back

10 years ago

A new federal prayer-in-schools proposal exposes division in the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission over how to "return Christ to the classroom." Trustees believe the agency should support mandated prayer, but Executive Director Richard Land said such legislation is unconstitutional.

20 years ago

W. Curtis and Deanie Ferrell are among 24 people named missionaries by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (now International Mission Board) April 7 in the Lakeland, Fla., Civic Center. The Ferrells will serve in Ecuador.

50 years ago

Bill Causey of Greenville is elected president of the Baptist Student Union at Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College in Clinton for the next academic session, according to Charles Tolbert, student secretary for the school.

Missions Garage Sale set April 6-7

Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, will hold a 2001 Missions Garage Sale April 6-7 from 7 a.m. until 3 p.m. Donations may be brought to the church. For more information call (601) 924-5620.

Ministers' wives to hear Kay Arthur

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Internationally known Bible teacher Kay Arthur will be the featured speaker at the Ministers' Wives Conference of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) June 12 in New Orleans.

Arthur and her husband Jack are the founders of Precept Ministries International, a Bible-teaching outreach based in Chattanooga, Tenn., with Bible study classes now extending to all 50 states and nearly 120 countries and more than 60 languages.

The 11:30 a.m. ministers' wives luncheon Tuesday, June 12, with "Lord, Fill My Cup" as its theme, will be held in the Hyatt Regency adjacent to the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans, site of the June 12-13 annual meeting of the SBC.

Advance tickets, at \$10 each, may be ordered by sending a check payable to the SBC Ministers' Wives Conference and a self-addressed stamped envelope to Kay Moore, P.O. Box 461592, Garland, TX 75046-1592. Advance ticket orders must be postmarked by May 15.

Tickets purchased at the SBC annual meeting will be \$12 each.

WCC troupe to perform at Kennedy Center

HATTIESBURG, Miss. (BP) — The William Carey College (WCC) Theatre production of *And David Danced* has been selected for the 2001 American College Theatre Festival at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

WCC, located in Hattiesburg and affiliated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention, is one of four colleges nationwide chosen to present a full production at the festival. A faculty member at another college likened it to "the Final Four and the Super Bowl rolled into one."

Other colleges to be represented are the University of Kansas, University of Oklahoma, and Boston University.

The play is an original work by Jonathan Pope Evans, a WCC graduate with a bachelor of fine arts degree in theater. It was premiered last October by the WCC Theatre in Hattiesburg.

Evans was awarded the top prize in Jean Kennedy Smith Playwriting Competition for his original play, *And David Danced*. The competition considers plays written by students that deal with someone coping with a disability.

Evans' play is a study of a man who has Huntington's disease, a deadly illness that destroys the mind and body, and its effects on the man's family and the community in which they live in a rural area of the American South.

The play was presented at the Mississippi/Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival at Mississippi State University in Starkville in November 2000.

The show advanced to the 10-state Region IV festival, hosted in February by the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

A national selection committee traveled to all eight of the festival competition's regions and selected WCC as one of the

four major productions to advance to the Kennedy Center. Additionally, several one-act plays were invited.

Performances are at 7:30 p.m. on April 23 and 24 in the Terrace Theatre at the Kennedy Center.

Evans began the process of writing *And David Danced* during his senior year at WCC and continued work on the play while a member of the staff of Carey Dinner Theatre last summer.

After the close of the season, Evans went home to Alabama and finished the first draft of the script. He entered graduate school at California Institute of the Arts in September while his creative work with the play continued.

Evans said he became interested in Huntington's disease while in a biology class at WCC. He said he "found the subject so compelling that I decided to write the play."

Evans will receive a cash prize, a fellowship to attend a prestigious playwriting program, and a free membership in the Dramatists Guild of America.

In addition to the production's selection for presentation at the Kennedy Center, two WCC theater students won two of three major design awards in the Region IV competition and will compete at the national festival at the Kennedy Center.

Zack Brown and Kelly James both won the Barbizon prize for their designs for *And David Danced*.

Brown was honored for his lighting of the production and James for costumes. Brown, of Tupelo, is a junior theater major. James, of

Meridian, also majors in theater.

Another Carey student, Joseph Brack, a senior from Whitman, Mass., received an honorable mention in the competition for his costume designs in the production *Pinocchio*.



Evans



HEADED FOR D.C. — William Carey College students Joseph Brack (seated) and Beth Winter play lead roles in *And David Danced* to be presented at the Kennedy Center in Washington. (BR special photo)

Churches affirm value of Cooperative Program

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

The Cooperative Program, established in 1925 to provide support for both the state conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention has stood the test of time.

Churches retain a portion of their member's financial gifts for church programs, and send the remainder to the state convention, which retains a portion for state convention programs and forwards the remainder to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

The system is ingenious.

Many churches and pastors in Mississippi give significant percentages of their annual budget to the Cooperative Program. Valley Park Church in Sharkey-Issaquena Association is typical of this mindset.

According to pastor Dennis Salley Jr., "Giving through the Cooperative Program is a heritage from our Women's Missionary Union that continues as an expression of grateful hearts."

"We believe that it is our responsibility and privilege to give and that God has led us to give as we do."

The church, with a resident membership of 111, gave \$9,381 last year.

"We are thankful that the Cooperative Program allows us to join with other Southern Baptists to multiply our gifts as we seek to fulfill the commission of our Lord Jesus Christ," Salley stated.

Hebron Church, in North Central Association, gave \$12,966 last year.

"One of the five functions of the church is evangelism," said Harold Simmons, pastor. "We are commanded to 'go' and are given an example of 'sending' (the church at Caesarea)."

"Hebron believes that we must follow both the command and the example of a New Testament Church. We are 'going' not only in our community but also to foreign mission fields."

"For the 'sending' we rely on the Cooperative Program, which is the most effective, efficient outreach available."

Rodney Anderson, pastor of Hickory Church, Hickory, takes a slightly different view of the Cooperative Program.

"The Cooperative Program is important for the education of our people," he said. "There are many ministers and missionaries who got quality educations because of Cooperative Program gifts."

Anderson mentioned the role of the Girls in Action program at Hickory Church. "Before the Annie Armstrong and Lottie Moon offerings, our girls sponsor bike-athons and other fund raisers to go toward missions."

"This church is sold on the Cooperative Program," said Anderson. "We've built a Family Life Center, remodeled Sunday School space, and remodeled the sanctuary without sacrificing on Cooperative Program giving."

Hickory Church gave \$54,203 to the Cooperative Program last year.

John L. Walker, pastor of First Church, Winona, praised the role of the Cooperative Program in his church.

"When the Cooperative Program was first adopted as a means to support missions of the convention, our church leaders at the time were instrumental in laying a foundation for First Church to participate in giving through this program."

"First Church has been blessed to have had strong leaders who built on this earlier foundation and led the church to give more through the Cooperative Program."

"Today, First Church gives 30.25% of all undesignated monies through the Cooperative Program to be used in obedience to Matt. 28:19."

"What we cannot do as one (church), we can do through cooperating with other churches," he pointed out.

Editor's note: For more information on the Cooperative Program in Mississippi, contact David Michel, MBCB associate executive director for missions extension, at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3233 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 233. E-mail: dmichel@mbcb.org.



THE TRAGEDY OF THE TRIUMPHANT ENTRY

On the Christian calendar, this coming Sunday, one week before Easter, is known as Palm Sunday, or the celebration of the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. It is the beginning of the final week of Jesus' life here on earth before the cross. No doubt the crowds were gathering in Jerusalem, not to honor Jesus so much as to be a part of the Jewish Passover.

This was a festive occasion and emotions ran high. Almost any spark could set off an explosion of excitement among the people. Jesus was well known and his reputation for miracles, teaching, and power from God seemed to be a catalyst that would cause an eruption of joy.

As the Lord came into Jerusalem riding upon a little donkey, the crowd was flamed into a frenzy. They began to treat Jesus as though he were a ruler; an emperor; a dignitary. To express their adoration, they laid down their coats, broke palm leaves, and placed them before him so that even the beast of burden upon which he rode would not have to walk on the cobblestone streets. They shouted out Hosannas, terms of praise, to the one who was coming. How could something that seemed so right, turn out so wrong?

Maybe an examination of what was happening with them can reveal some things that are going on with us.



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

• **Their purpose was flawed.** The crowds that gathered at Jerusalem and hailed Jesus as a new arriving king seemed to be doing something that, if we are not careful, we are equally guilty of committing: Just stop and think about what these Jewish pilgrims, gathered in Jerusalem, must have been thinking.

They were tired of the rulers from Rome telling them what to do. They longed for the return of a king that would be powerful enough to break the oppression they felt from Rome and reestablish the glory days they had under King David.

Here was the problem — they wanted their purposes in life carried out and accomplished by Jesus, so they honored and praised him...to get their way.

As strange as it may sound, many of us are looking for that kind of god to put on the throne of our own hearts. They wanted a god who would hate the people they hated, and would have enough power to do what they wanted done, when they wanted it done!

Their purposes were flawed in that they were not looking

for a savior who would come and rule over their hearts, but a powerful savior who would respond to their heart's desires and do their bidding.

Sadly, it is the kind of savior that all too many of us want to embrace — one who will sit close by and do what we want him to do. Heal this! Fix that! Change this! Stop them! Lift this burden! Change that person! And, on and on it goes. Jesus is Lord and we are to do his will, not simply tell him how to do our will.

• **Their praise was fragile.** It must have been exciting! Can you imagine the crowds in Jerusalem that lined the streets and almost with spontaneous eruption, the praise begins to come forth. It is good praise! It is Godly praise! It is grand and growing praise! How could you not join in? How could this not be right? How could everyone, including you and me, not join in? Yet, this praise was fragile. The palm leaves detached from the trees would continue to live longer than the praise did.

As Jesus passed along before a parade of praise, it is interest-

ing to note that you can almost hear in the distance the faint, soft, guttural sounds coming from some of the same people as they began to say, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" While there is certainly nothing wrong with praise to Jesus, we must not lose sight of the fact that ultimately the Christian walk is built not just on glowing comments, but deep commitments.

Within a week the sounds are gone, the streets are empty, and Jesus dies alone.

• **The plot is forged.** Those that participated in praising Jesus wanted to make him a king and sovereign. They may have lacked a great deal in real devotion. It seems as though they heightened and solidified the hatred the enemies of Jesus already had. From the triumphant entry of Jesus, the pieces of the plot were being brought together — to find and to destroy him.

If you had been there in Jerusalem, you probably would have been humming the chants of praise. Smiling and happily walking along, you would be thinking all is well with the world. But, evil was at work! The very powers that Jesus came to destroy were strategizing and lining up forces to see that he was silenced.

This, like every facet of the Easter story, reminds us that God is still on his throne. What looked like triumph, becomes tragedy! Hang on, though — for in only a few days, what looks like tragedy, becomes triumph!

Texas won't change IMB funding

DALLAS (ABP) — A Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) committee studying the state's relationship with mission-sending agencies will not recommend defunding of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) International Mission Board (IMB), nor will the state organization send its own missionaries, the study-group chairman said in a preliminary report.

Chairman James Denison, pastor of Park Cities Church in Dallas, reported on progress of the study to the BGCT Executive Board.

While not mentioning the North American Mission Board or Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in his preliminary report, Denison said in a prepared statement, "[W]e can tell Texas Baptists today that we will not be recommending a change relative to the BGCT's budgetary commitment to the IMB and have never intended such a recommendation."

This year Texas Baptists have budgeted more than \$12.2 million for the Richmond, Va.,-based IMB, just less than 17% of the BGCT's total budget.

Denison said the committee has also been asked if it would recommend that Texas Baptists become a mission-sending agency. "We have not discussed such an option and are not planning to make such a recommendation," he said.

Pro-gay Atlanta churches dodge second ouster

ATLANTA (ABP) — Two Atlanta Baptist churches under fire for welcoming and affirming homosexuals survived a second ouster vote from their local association March 12.

Atlanta Association approved by a required two-thirds majority a new bylaw excluding any church "which knowingly takes, or has taken, any action to affirm, approve, or

endorse homosexual behavior."

A separate vote, however, to sever ties with two churches earlier removed from the Georgia Convention for pro-gay stances fell short of a required two-thirds majority, with association messengers voting 254-188 for expulsion.

Observers said they were confused by the seeming discrepancy between the two bal-

lots. Referral of yet a third motion on church discipline to the association's membership committee suggested the issue isn't yet dead.

Most people speaking for expulsion at a packed First Church of Hapeville, Ga., for the Atlanta Association's semi-annual meeting, however, appeared more interested in starting a new association.

About 50 individuals met Feb. 22 to take initial steps to form a new organization tentatively called the Metro Atlanta Baptist Association.

Earlier in the March 12 meeting of Atlanta Association, messengers accepted the requested withdrawal of the 6,000-member Rehoboth Church in Tucker, Ga. About 20 of the association's 153 congregations are said to be considering severing ties to join the rival association.

Oakhurst Church in Decatur, Ga., and Virginia-Highland Church in inner-city Atlanta are the churches that survived the votes to withdraw fellowship.

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JUST FOR THE RECORD



Children of First Church, Magee

Prayerwalking opportunities available

Individuals and groups are needed to participate in Prayerwalking trips to four areas in the northeastern United States. These trips are being sponsored by the Women's Missionary Union department in support of the Impact Northeast partnership Mississippi Baptists currently have with five Northeast states/conventions.

If you or your church are interested in participating in these Prayerwalks, please contact the team leader for specific details and costs of each trip.

• **June 23-30**, Pennsylvania/South Jersey, Team Leader: Debbie Sills, (601) 292-3320 or dsills@mbcb.org.

• **July 12-20**, New York, Team Leader: Kathy Burns, (601) 292-3324 or kburns@mbcb.org.

• **October 14-20**, Maryland/Delaware, Team Leader: Robin Keels, (601) 292-3322 or rkeels@mbcb.org.

• **October 21-27**, Washington D.C., Team Leader: Tammy Anderson, (601) 292-3323 or tanderson@mbcb.org.

For more information contact the WMU office at (601) 292-3316 or (800) 748-1651, ext. 316.

Members of First Church, Magee, broke ground on March 19, for their multi-purpose building that will be constructed across the street from the church. The building will have Sunday School rooms, a large activity room, and walking track. The children, preschool through sixth grade, participated in the ground breaking ceremony. Marjorie Blackwell is director of childhood education. Jerry Sullivan is pastor.

The choir and drama team of West End Church, West Point, will present The Lamb of God, April 14 at 6 p.m. and April 15 at 10:00 a.m. For more information, contact the church at (662) 494-2137.

Mission Friends of Cleary Church, Florence, presented Gene Gillis, pastor, with a check for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The Mission Friends raised \$167. Pictured are Courtney May, Morgan Moak, Gillis, Jesse Yelverton, and Julie Jones.



Mission Friends of Cleary Church, Florence

The choir of Barnes Crossing Church, Saitillo, will present Who Do You Say That I Am, April 15 at 11 a.m. Harrell Hill is minister of music. J.D. Johnson is pastor.

The youth and children's choirs of Bethel Church, Water Valley, will present Fish Tales, April 15 at 6 p.m. Fish Tales are stories that will help children find out what was so good about Good Friday and the Resurrection.

Daniel Memorial Church, Jackson, will present On A Hill Too Far Away, April 13 at 7 p.m. Ross Johnson is the music director. Steve Potts is pastor. For more information, call (601) 376-4100.

Lay Renewal Weekend will be held at Furrs Church, Pontotoc, April 13-15, at 7 p.m.

First Church, Florence, will host Rebecca St. James in concert on April 30 at 7 p.m. For ticket information, call (601) 845-7197.

Deerfield Church, Madison, will host Buster Wilson and Shelly Overby, April 6-8. Wilson, a Jackson native, will share his experiences of the Mississippi Crosswalk. Overby is a contemporary Christian recording artist. The times are Friday and Saturday, 7 p.m., and Sunday, 10 a.m. Author Comans is pastor.

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Rocky Point, Carthage, held dedication for stained glass windows on March 25. The windows were dedicated to former pastors. Marshall Lum is pastor.

Big Creek Church, Waynesboro, will host a county wide youth crusade with Ken Freeman and praise band, Among Thorns. The crusade will be held at 7 p.m., April 8-11, at the old Wal-Mart building on Hwy 45. For more information, call (601) 735-2473 or 763-6607. Anthony Underwood is youth pastor and a member of the Wayne County Youth Alliance.

Harperville Church, Scott Association, held a special GA recognition ceremony at the prayer meeting hour on Feb. 14 during WMU Focus Week. The GAs presented a program with the theme Following Jesus with John 15:12, Love One Another, as the Scripture emphasis. GAs receiving bracelets and charms for completion of their

WorldVenture were Kelsey Stewart, Melinda Mengucci, Heather Hoard, Hannah Benton, Tara Martin, Lindsey Sanders, LaTasha Watts, Candace Johnson, Becky Watts, and Jennifer Reid. Leaders are Peggy McDaniel, Karon Martin, Mollie Dolan and Juanita Nichols.

GAs of Big Creek Church, Calhoun Association, joined the RAs in building and racing cars on March 21. Winners, pictured with Chis Conlee, pastor, are Deanna Reynolds, Colen Gaskin, and T. J. Clanton.



GAs and RAs of Big Creek Church, Calhoun Association



Williamsville Church, Kosciusko, sent a group of forty GAs and RAs on a Spring Break trip. The group (pictured) toured the Women's Missionary Union headquarters in Birmingham, Ala.; the North American Mission Board headquarters in Atlanta, Ga.; and the USS Yorktown aircraft carrier in Charleston, S.C. This trip was planned to give the group a history lesson as well as a lesson on how missions helps people spread God's Word across the world. Danny K. Plunkett is RA director. Jerry East is pastor.

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What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

April 5, 2001

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS TRAINING INSTITUTE

INTRODUCTORY SEMINARS

April 20-21, 2001

- North Greenwood BC, Greenwood
Phone: 662-453-2801
- FBC, Gulfport
Phone: 228-863-8501

April 27-28, 2001

- Morrison Heights BC, Clinton
Phone: 601-924-5620
- Easthaven BC, Brookhaven
Phone: 601-833-2597

COST: \$15

includes two meals and the latest International Missions Training Institute volunteer orientation manual.

The deadline for registration is March 30, 2001. However, we encourage a prompt response as only 50 seats are available.

Sponsored by: Partnership Missions Dept.
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

LAD DAD CRUSADER DAY 2001

Central Hills Baptist Retreat
Kosciusko

April 21, 2001 • 9 a.m.-2 p.m. • Cost: \$4

Bring a sack lunch. (Drink will be provided.)



Register Early!
DEADLINE: APRIL 13
MAXIMUM ATTENDANCE: 500
Come and meet our missionaries

For more info contact the Men's Ministry Department of MBCB
601-968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651

2001 State Senior Adult Retreats at Gulfshore

"The Spiritual Transformational Senior"

May 14-16 Senior Adult I (cost: \$89)



The Richardson Family

Preachers: Jay Richardson, Greenville
Gary Richardson, West Point
James Richardson, Madison
Music: Ian Richardson and
the Senior Adult Choir, FBC, Cleveland

May 17-19 Senior Adult II (cost: \$89)



Phil Walker

Preacher: Phil Walker, Ridgecrest, Madison
Music: Ed Sudduth and choir, FBC, McComb

May 21-25 Senior Adult III
(cost: \$160)

Dean Register

Preacher: Dean Register, Temple BC, Hattiesburg
Music: Ken Hopkins and the Senior Adult Choir, Temple BC, Hattiesburg

Conferences include: Reaching Seniors through Sunday School,
My Identity in Christ, Free to Forgive, and Happy Side of Life (humor).

\$40 deposit per person after March 1, 2001

Contact Gulfshore Baptist Assembly 228-452-7261

2001 State Singles Retreat at Gulfshore

"The Power of a
Transformational Single"



Alan Correy

May 26-28

Renee Schidt

- Men's Conferences with Alan Correy
- Women's Conferences with Renee Schidt
- Hawaiian Luau with steel drum band, Holmes Community College
- Celebration Services • Conferences • Seafood Banquet
- "Walking Faithfully" with Gwen Williams, Miss Chocolate
- Forgiveness • Finances • My Identity In Christ

T-Shirt for early registration (\$40 deposit by May 1)

- Sunday options include Jazzland (\$20 by May 1), New Orleans, Seamen's Ministry, Swamp Tour
- Sunday Night Concert featuring *The Naturals* from Mississippi College

Call the Discipleship and Family Ministry Dept. for info: 601-968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651.

*"the difference
1
can make"*

Sunday School DIRECTORS'

Monday May 7 FBC, Booneville 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Monday May 14 FBC, Columbia 6:30-8:30 p.m.



CONFERENCE LEADER

Our conference will be led by **Wayne Poling**, LifeWay Christian Resources, Nashville. Wayne is a Sunday School/FAITH consultant at LifeWay and has, for many years, shown special interest in Sunday School directors. He has also been instrumental in the National Sunday School Directors' Seminars.

Registration Form

Name: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Address: _____

I serve as Sunday School director
for _____ Baptist Church in (city) _____

Please complete form and mail to:
Sunday School Department
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205-0530

For more information call the Sunday School Department at 968-3800 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651.

You won't want to miss this event as Wayne shares his heart and knowledge of the basics of Sunday School work. He will equip you with the skills to help your Sunday School be a foundational strategy for reaching people and building Great Commission Christians.

NO COST FOR THIS EVENT!

Think outside the lines! Get outside the walls!

YOUTH BIBLE STUDY: OUTSIDE THE WALLS

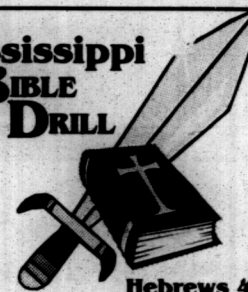
May 5, 2001 - FBC, Gulfport
9-11:30 a.m.

• For program information contact Mark Lott, Sunday School Department
(601)292-3295 or 1-800-748-1651

CHILDREN AND YOUTH STATE BIBLE DRILLS 2001

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
TUESDAY April 17	Greenwood, FBC McComb, FBC	2:30-4:30 p.m. 2:30-4:30 p.m.
THURSDAY April 19	Tupelo, FBC (Churches outside Lee, Pontotoc, Itawamba, Union County and Tishomingo Associations) Tupelo, Calvary BC (Churches inside Lee, Pontotoc, Itawamba, Union County and Tishomingo Associations)	2:30-4:30 p.m. 2:30-4:30 p.m.
FRIDAY April 20	Starkville, FBC (Churches outside Golden Triangle and Winston Associations) Starkville, Calvary BC (Churches inside Golden Triangle and Winston Associations)	2:30-4:30 p.m. 2:30-4:30 p.m.
SATURDAY April 21	Clinton, FBC Clinton, FBC (Churches inside Metro, Rankin and Warren Associations) Brandon, FBC (Churches outside Metro, Rankin, and Warren Associations)	9:30-11:30 a.m. 1:00-3:00 p.m. 1:00-3:00 p.m.
MONDAY April 23	Meridian, FBC Petal, Petal-Harvey BC	2:30-4:30 p.m. 2:30-4:30 p.m.
TUESDAY April 24	Laurel, FBC	2:30-4:30 p.m.
THURSDAY April 26	Senatobia, FBC Gulfport, FBC	2:30-4:30 p.m. 2:30-4:30 p.m.
SATURDAY April 28	Selection Tournaments (see additional info)	

Mississippi BIBLE DRILL



Hebrews 4:12

SELECTION TOURNAMENTS

Saturday, April 28
Alta Woods BC, Jackson

YOUTH SPEAKERS TOURNAMENT
10:00 a.m.
(Registration 9:30 - 9:45)

YOUTH JUNIOR HIGH TOURNAMENT
1:00 p.m.
(Registration 12:30 - 1:15 p.m.)

SCHOLARSHIP TOURNAMENT
2:00 p.m.
(Registration 1:30 - 2 p.m.)

Church Packs are
available upon request
through the Discipleship and Family
Ministry Department, MBCB.
1-800-748-1651 or
1-601-968-3800

Central Hills Summer Camp Schedule

Summer Missions Camp for Boys and Royal Ambassadors

2 • 0 • 0 • 1

ROYAL AMBASSADORS AND CHALLENGERS

- June 11-15
- June 18-22
- June 25-29
- Week Off (July 5-9)
- July 9-13
- July 16-20
- July 23-27

LAD-DAD

June 22-23

July 20-21

MOTHER-SON

July 27-28

For more information contact
Central Hills
601-289-9730

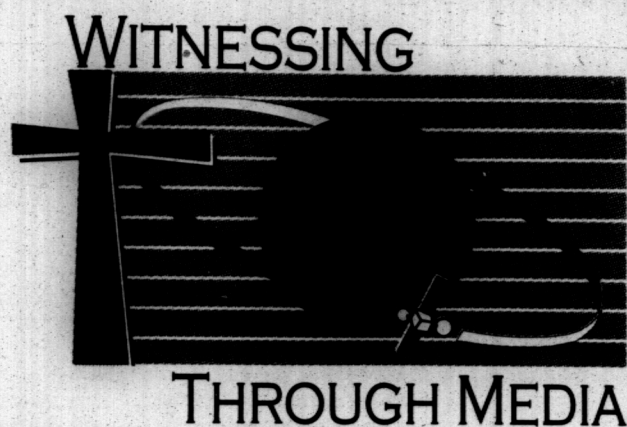
RESIDENT CAMP

\$115 per person

10 a.m. Monday - 10 a.m. Friday
(grades 4-12)

Please choose a week which is free of
schedule conflicts. Each camper is expected
to remain at CHBR for the whole
camp session.

MAY 4-5, 2001
RIDGECREST BAPTIST CHURCH
MADISON



WORKSHOPS

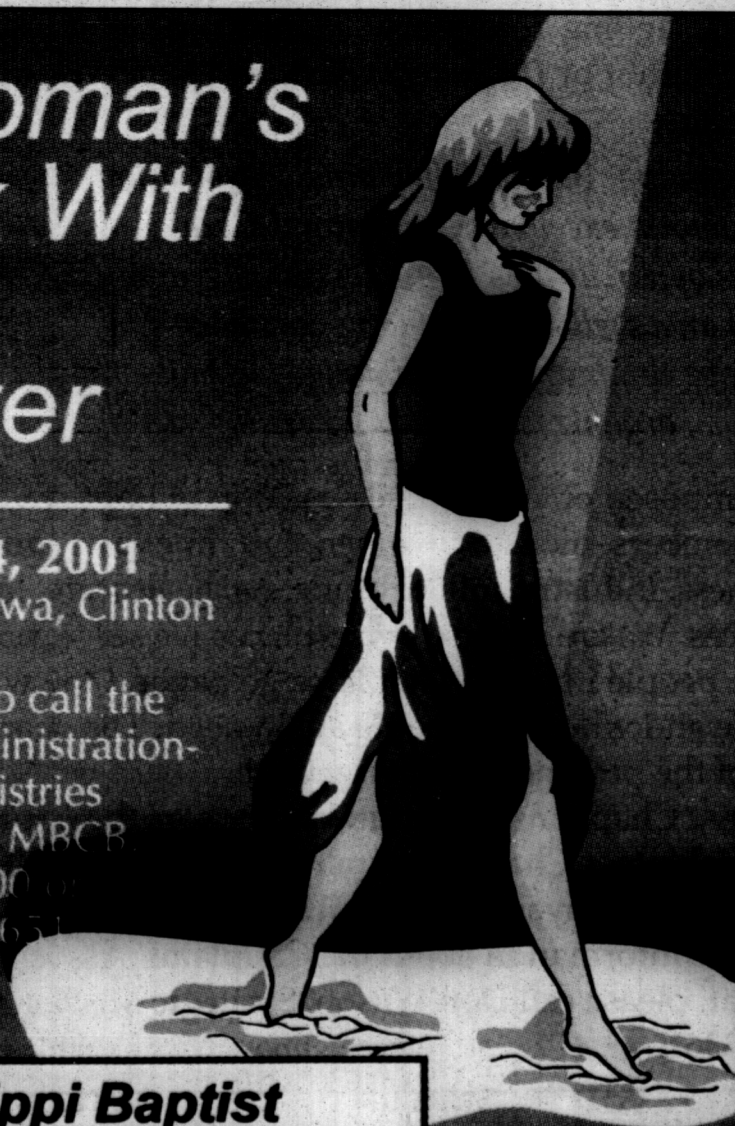
Reservation Deadline is April 25, 2001 •
Sponsored by Broadcast Services, MBCB
For more info call 601-968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651

A Woman's Walk With The Master

April 23-24, 2001
Camp Garaywa, Clinton

For more info call the
Church Administration-
Pastoral Ministries
Department, MBCB
601-968-3800 or
1-800-748-1651

**Mississippi Baptist
Secretaries Conference**



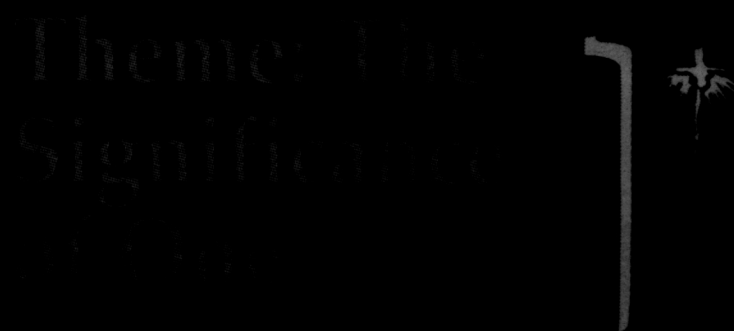
Pack your bags and get
ready for adventure, thrills,
and a search for truth!

VBS PREVIEW CLINICS

FBC WIGGINS - APRIL 9
NORTH OXFORD SC. CHURCH - APRIL 10

Contact the Sunday School Department for more info:
968-3800 (in Jackson) or 1-800-748-1651

PREACHING AND WORSHIP CONFERENCE



April 30 - May 1, 2001
Poplar Springs Drive
Baptist Church
Meridian

Featured
Preachers
and Presenters:

Chuck Allen
Pamela Boucher
Matt Buckles

Dennis Johnsey
Frank Pollard

REGISTRATION FORM PREACHING AND WORSHIP CONFERENCE

Name _____
Church _____
Position _____
Address _____
City _____ Zip _____
Phone (____) _____ Fax (____) _____
E-mail _____

Please complete form and mail to:
Church Administration - Pastoral Ministries Dept., MBCB,
PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205-0530; or fax (601-714-7426);
or E-mail information to: kmcdonnell@mbcb.org by April
25, so that we might prepare materials.

Call 601-968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651 for more information.

Pray this day for...

April 6 - 19, 2001

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 601-292-3304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-7729 (PRAY)

THE IMPORTANCE OF ONE MAN'S PRAYER - "There had never been such a day before, and there has never been another since, when the Lord stopped the sun and moon- all because of the prayer of one man... Joshua 10: 14a (The Living Bible)

Pray that God's Word will be the standard for deaf men in Dominican Christian marriages. Missionaries Stan and Lynn Stepleton have begun a series of conferences about the biblical basis for the family. Pray for husbands and wives to accept Christ's help for their family life.

Easter - Because Christ died and rose again, we have the certain hope of Easter. Christ is alive and God is still at work. Pray that we will be sensitive to unexpected opportunities to share our faith in the living Christ.

For (1) VBS Preview Clinic, FBC, Wiggins; (SS), (2) Duane Bechtold in Plano, Tex., is a Mission Service Corps volunteer serving as a church strengthener. Pray for a new church in this area, currently meeting in a school, to find a long-term location by this summer.

Baptist representatives of Team Students, in the UK, encourage you to pray for students in Glasgow, Scotland, who desire to offer a discovery-type Bible study to their friends. Ask God to give them boldness and sensitivity and that non-Christian friends will be drawn to the study.

For (1) VBS Preview Clinic; North Oxford BC, Oxford; (SS), (2) Pray for a successful Easter weekend retreat and evangelization project at the Nanterre Church in France. Pray that through this special event many will come to know the real meaning of Easter.

For (1) State Bible Drills; FBC, Greenwood/FBC, McComb; 2:30-4:30 p.m. (Discipleship & Family Ministry), (2) Please pray today for Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit of Turkey (eastern Mediterranean).

Students come from all over Argentina to study in the Baptist Theological Seminary in Buenos Aires. Missionary Stanley Clark asks for prayer for 50 people who are currently seeking admission. Pray that students will have a vision and urgency to reach their own people.

Pray for the 22.5 million people of Taiwan who are without Christ. Western TV and movies give them a distorted understanding of Christianity. Pray for missionaries and Christians in Taiwan to be able to dispel the many deceptions they have believed.

Begin praying for the Greater Louisville, KY, Billy Graham Crusade June 21-24. Billy, 81, wants to keep preaching as long as God gives him the strength.

(1) State Bible Drills, FBC, Calvary BC., Tupelo (D&FM), (2) Pray for Robak Hoospianner, pastor of the Iranian Christian Church in Glendale, Calif. Pray the church continues to be sound.

For (1) Father/Daughter Overnight; Camp Garaywa; (WMU), (2) Celebrating the Family; Recreation Center, Tunica; (Adult Team), (3) Leadership Training Conference; Gulfshore Assembly; (CLGM)

For (1) Family Festival; Civic Center, Greenwood; (Adult Team), (2) Last year several believers among the Nubians of Egypt and Sudan were betrayed by one of their own and imprisoned. Others suffered persecution from family, etc. Pray that their faith will increase.

Pray for the country of Macedonia as small gunfire and propaganda spreads further into the interior. Continue to pray for the Macedonian president, Boris Trajkovski, a Protestant Christian, and the rest of the government leaders as they try to avoid a war but also protect their nation.

Pray for the strength of missionary Pat Stooksbury, in Bolivia, as she leads nine discipleship groups. Four are composed of Bolivian pastors, including the current president of the Bolivian Baptist Convention. Pray that God will open their eyes to the importance of discipleship.

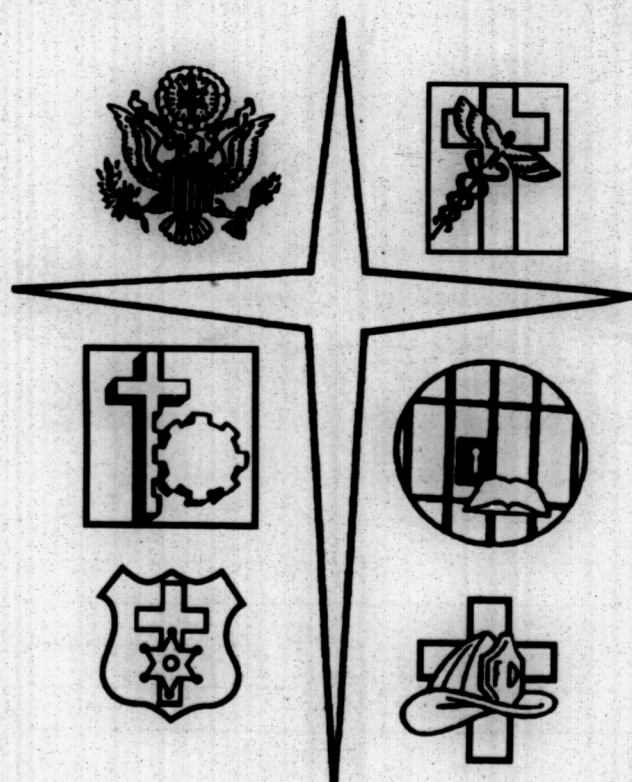
MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CHAPLAINS' ASSOCIATION SPRING RETREAT

Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Pass Christian

April 27-28, 2001

Our theme this year is, "Telling Your Story... Until You Get it Right"
Led by Dr. Myron Madden, author of *The Power to Bless*, and supervisor of Clinical Pastoral Education for 35 years.

*The Mississippi Baptist Chaplains' Association
promotes excellence in Pastoral Care
provides opportunities for professional growth
enhances fellowship among members
seeks to improve communication among chaplains and the
organizations they serve*



The association is composed of a very diverse group of Baptist Chaplains. We have more than 50 active members, men and women; full time; part time; paid and volunteer; who serve business, industry, military, prisons, healthcare, law enforcement and emergency services. We are diverse in the places we serve, but we all have a calling from God to serve people in need. Chaplains go beyond the wall of the church, in every walk of life and wherever people are in need. The chaplain's presence is a visible reminder of the presence of a living God.

The Mississippi Baptist Chaplains' Association sponsors three main events each year: Spring Retreat, Volunteer Chaplain's Training Seminar, and Fall Banquet. Our dues are \$20 per year and are payable by May 1.

If you would like more information about the Chaplains' Association or attending the Spring Retreat, please call Don Wilson, Strategic Missions, MBCB, 1-800-748-1651 or 601-292-3361.

HOUSE TOPS

NAMES IN THE NEWS

Birdie Lee Hubbard, member of Temple Church, Hattiesburg, recently received her 35-year perfect attendance Sunday School pin from Gary Shows, associate pastor. Pictured (from left) are Shows and Hubbard.



Shows and Hubbard

Tom Whisenant was presented a plaque of appreciation for eight years of teaching Sunday School by Robert Daniel, pastor of Harmony Church, New Albany. Dale Manning presented Whisenant a monetary gift from the church. Pictured (from left) are Daniel, Whisenant, and Manning.



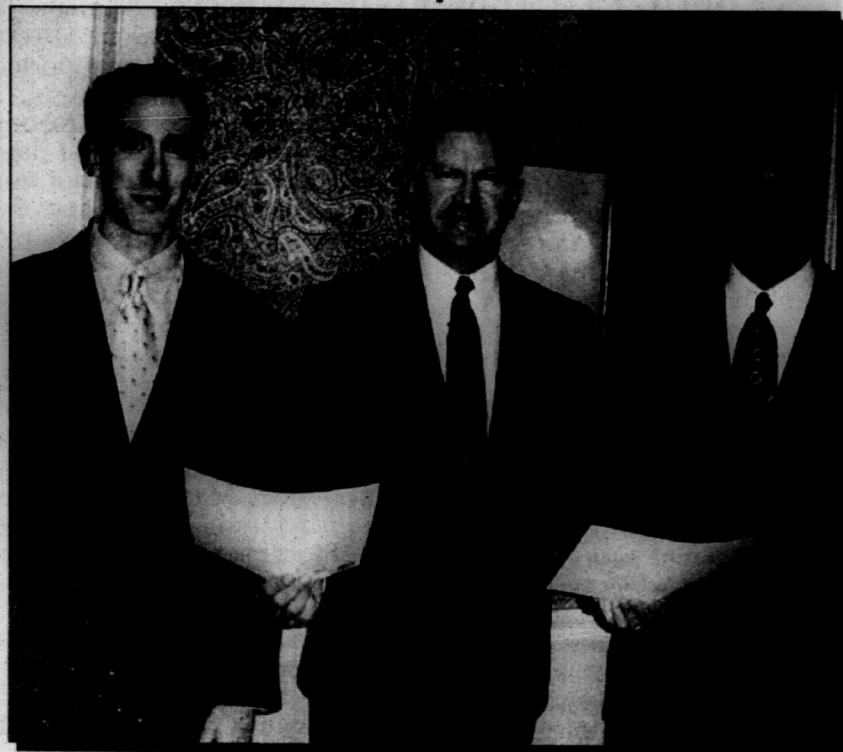
Daniel, Whisenant, and Manning

Sylvarena Church, Sylvarena, will present The Agony of the Cross, April 13 at 7 p.m. Easter services on April 15 will begin at 7 a.m.

followed by a churchwide breakfast.

Oakland Church, Corinth, recently ordained to the ministry Craig Beasley, church member and student at Blue Mountain College; and Bryan Robertson, newly-called min-

ister to students. Randy Bostick is pastor. Pictured (from left) are Beasley, Bostick, and Robertson.



Beasley, Bostick, and Robertson

BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

The Mississippi Guitar Quartet will perform for the annual Birma Pool Guyton Lyceum at Blue Mountain College on April 9 at 8 p.m. The quartet, founded by John DeChiaro, professor of Guitar at the University of Southern Mississippi, will present a wide variety of musical styles. For additional information, contact the college at (662) 685-4771, ext. 131.

The William Carey College Theatre will present William

Shakespeare's comedy Much Ado About Nothing as its major final production of the 2000-2001 academic year. Performances are at 8 p.m., April 5-7. Seats for the performances in the O. L. Quave Theatre may be reserved by calling (601) 582-6221. The box office will be open daily from 1-4 p.m. beginning April 2.

The Mississippi College Chorale and Singers, with members of the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra, will perform Mozart's Solemn Vespers

and Leonard Bernstein's Chichester Psalms on April 12, 7:30 p.m., in Swor Auditorium. James M. Meaders is conductor.

Mississippi College is pleased to offer the Mississippi College Speaker's Bureau. Speakers from the college's faculty and staff are available to speak to groups and professional organizations. Civic, educational, and professional organizations seeking a speaker on current issues or historically significant topics may contact the Mississippi College Speaker's Bureau, Box 4003, Clinton, MS 39058. The Office of Public Relations will coordinate requests for speakers. A list of scholars and researchers, naming their areas of expertise, is available from the Office of Public Relations by calling (601) 925 3934 or e-mail: alsmith@mc.edu.

William Carey College Winters School of Music will present the operetta, Trial by Jury, April 19 and 20 at 8 p.m. at the Saenger Theater located in downtown Hattiesburg. Connie Roberts of the music faculty is the conductor and Shannon Robert of the theater faculty is the director. For additional information or to reserve tickets call the School of Music at (601) 582-6175.

Jonathan Pope Evans, a William Carey College graduate, won the national prize in the Jean Kennedy Smith Playwriting Competition for his original play, And David Danced. The contest is sponsored by the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival. The competition considers plays written by students which deal with someone coping with a disability. And David Danced is a study of a man who has Huntington's Disease, a deadly illness that destroys the mind and body. The play chronicles the effects of the disease upon the man's family and the community in which they live in a rural area in the American South. Evans will receive a cash prize, a fellowship to attend a prestigious playwriting program, and a free membership in the Dramatists Guild of America.

Garaywa summer staff sought

Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) is currently taking applications for Summer Camp Staff for eight weeks of GA camp beginning the week of June 4, at Camp Garaywa. Applicants must be at least 18 years old, and have completed one year of college. Requirements include: pre-camp training May 29-through June 1; Sunday afternoon to Friday afternoon of each week of camp (June 4 through July 27); staff GA Mother/Daughter Overnight June 22-23. Call Robin Keels at (601) 292-3322 or (800) 748-1651, ext. 322 for an application.

WMU is also taking applications for Cabin Leaders in Training (CITs). CITs serve for one week of camp and are assigned to work with a particular cabin and also have the responsibilities of carrying out the day-to-day needs of camp. Applicants must be 16-18 years of age and in the 10th, 11th, or 12th grade; must agree to serve for an entire week of camp; and must be an active member of Acteens or their church youth group. For an application, contact Robin Keels at (601) 292-3322 or (800) 748-1651, ext. 322. E-mail: rkeels@mbcb.org.

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LifeWay to offer free HCS Bible

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — LifeWay Christian Stores and Broadman & Holman (B&H) Publishers have joined forces to provide a free New Testament to any customer who asks for one.

Through April 15, copies of the Holman Christian Standard (HCS) Bible Here's Hope New Testament paperback edition are being given away, one per customer, as an outreach Easter promotion, said Randy Martin, a buyer for the LifeWay Christian Stores.

The HCS Bible is a new translation being developed by B&H, a division of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. All 97 LifeWay stores across the country are participating in the New Testament giveaway, Martin said.

The HCS Bible is a work in progress currently being shaped by a team of 80 scholars representing 20 evangelical Protestant denominations. The translation combines accuracy with readability. It is based foremost on a word-by-word translation from the original Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic languages and aided by the use of groundbreaking cross-reference computer software and input from professional English stylists.

The entire Old and New Testament HCS translation will be released in the spring of 2004. For more information, log on to broadmanholman.com or lifewaystores.com.

Saddam seeks army to 'liberate' Jerusalem

JERUSALEM (BP) — Training has begun for thousands of Iraqis who have volunteered to serve in Saddam Hussein's special army raised to assist the Palestinians to "liberate" Jerusalem from Israel, CNSNews.com reported March 12.

However, according to one Iraqi expert, the "greatest danger" from Saddam is not this army, but his drive to keep the intifada (Palestinian uprising) alive and to prevent Palestinian Authority (PA)

Chairman Yasir Arafat from reaching a compromise deal with Israel.

Iraqi national television has shown thousands of men and women celebrating as volunteers boarded buses for camps over the March 9 weekend, where they will reportedly be trained for the special task, CNSNews.com reported.

"We shall not give up two [things]...Palestine and Saddam Hussein," the volunteers reportedly chanted.

At the beginning of the

Palestinian uprising late last year, Saddam called for volunteers to fight against Israel to "liberate" Jerusalem. Official Iraqi sources claim that some 7 million Iraqis — nearly one-third of the 22 million population — have offered their lives for the battle.

However, Amatzia Baram, professor of Middle East history at the University of Haifa, said that number needs to be kept in proper perspective.

It is "very feasible" that millions have volunteered, but they

were ordered to do so, he told CNSNews.com. In some cases, "volunteers" may include men and women with large numbers of children, who will never actually be trained to fight.

The "greatest danger" from Saddam, Baram said, is not his army — whatever its size — but his efforts to fuel the intifada and to prevent Arafat from compromising on his goal to rule over all of "Palestine," including all of Israel.

"[Saddam] is the most popular leader in Palestine," Baram said, noting that the Iraqi leader has given \$1 billion in food and medicine to the Palestinians.

He also gives a \$10,000 check to the family of every victim killed in the violence, the professor added.

Recently, media reports suggested that Arafat had a plan to stoke the violence in the PA-controlled areas and when the situation became too bad, he would flee to Baghdad, but Baram said that while spreading such a rumor was a sign of "astute statesmanship," there was very little chance of it happening.

Although Saddam has a large following among Palestinians, he is an embarrassment to the PA leadership because of his seeming generosity and support for their cause, he said.

Arafat also does not trust him, according to reports.

Mississippians appointed to Philippines

Gregory and Paula Pearce Davis were among 63 people appointed March 10 by the International Mission Board (IMB) during a service at Broadmoor Church in Shreveport, La.

The Davises will work in the Philippines where less than 2% of the 1.4 million people are born-again Christians. He will help start churches among the small towns to facilitate a church-planting movement. She will conduct home and community outreach.

Since 1996 he has served as pastor of Hebron Church in Bentonla.

His parents, Gerald and Glenda Davis, are currently serving as IMB mis-

sionaries in the Philippines. He is a graduate of Mississippi College in Clinton and New Orleans Seminary.

She was born in Jackson to Everett and Shirley Pearce of Terry.

Gregory Davis first felt God's leading to enter the ministry in 1982. At that time he publicly committed to a ministry career. While in college he attended a state Baptist Student Union conference, where he made a decision to become a missionary. But Davis said he spent the next several years running away from God's will.

Three years ago he was

attending a class at New Orleans Seminary when a guest speaker gave a presentation about missions.

He called his wife after the class to tell her he felt God was leading them to join the mission field.

"I told Gregory that I had felt this as well for a little while, and that it must be of God," she said. "It is clear to me without any doubt that God has called me for a special purpose in his ministry, and Gregory and I know at this point that is missions."

The Davises have two children: Mason Joseph, born in 1995, and Tristan Noah, born in 1997.



P. Davis



G. Davis

REVIVAL DATES

Tuscola (Leake): April 8-12; Sunday, 11 a.m. followed by lunch in fellowship hall, and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 7 p.m.; Sonny Adkins, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, evangelist; Craig Stevens, Madden Church, music; Smith Sanders, pastor.

Beulah, Decatur: April 8-11; Sunday, 10:50 a.m. followed by a meal, and 6:50 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Danny Lanier, evangelist; Alvyn Moore, music; Byron Howell, pastor.

Macedonia, Petal: April 22-25; 7 p.m. nightly; Bud Swindall, Southside, Ala., evangelist; Tony Hinton, Macedonia Church, music; Nelson Crozier, pastor.

Shiloh, Houlika: April 22-25; 7 p.m. nightly; Elton Johnson, Fayetteville, Ga., evangelist; Ray Walker, Pontotoc, music; Jon Haines, pastor.

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FOCUS ON CHRIST

Editor:

Truly I am disheartened over this (state flag) conflict because I do love Christ's Church of which I am a part. Something was placed in my heart concerning this issue that has brought me to a place of peace.

Although this flag represents evil, prejudice, and hatred to some people, I see it as a symbol of a struggle for freedom which resulted in freedom for the oppressed — just like the cross Jesus carried. Jesus, who was innocent, without spot, and of a pure heart, the lamb of God, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who with crimson stripes on his back and piercing thorns through his head, carried his cross to Calvary only to be nailed to it in crucifixion.

This cross to the people in that day represented disgrace, evil, prejudice, and hatred, but to us who are born-again Christians, we see the cross as a symbol of our freedom from sin and redemption from the oppression sin creates. We hold dear to this symbol, even wearing the disgrace around our necks on gold chains every day.

Oh, what a glory! To take evil and crush it for good! Praise the Lord and rejoice! Don't let the enemy — our true enemy, Satan — blind us with his subtle tricks. Focus on Christ, not the flag.

Laurie King
Brookhaven

PURPOSE IMPORTANT

Editor:

In the discussion about the flag, it seems to me that the purpose of the flag is important. To use a flag has always been a rallying point, something that draws people together. It also seems to me to represent the thing over which it flies. It represents home, family, and the place we live. If these are indeed the purposes of a flag, then our current flags fails on both counts.

The very nature of the process

in which we find ourselves attests to the fact that this flag separates us — its first failure. It doesn't draw to it the 30-40% of the people of Mississippi who are reminded every time they see it that they were no more than slaves under it.

It fails the second purpose. The current flag represents the State of Mississippi 150 years ago, not today. Then it was a different government, a different society, a different economy, and a different church. The State of Mississippi of 150 years ago legalized, institutionalized, and perpetuated slavery.

It seems to me this state and all its people would be better served by a flag that all of us could rally around, one that represents the good things that Mississippi is today — a place where all of us, with God's grace, can grow into the fullness of Christ.

Bill McGoodwin
Water Valley

GESTURES MATTER

Editor:

Nearly a year ago, I wrote a letter to our Mississippi Baptist newspaper in which I suggested that there were Gospel reasons — spirit of Christ reasons — for our state's flag to be changed to some design that would not include the Confederate battle emblem. The "flag issue" has taken new turns since then, and soon the people of our state will vote to retain or remove the Confederate battle emblem as a part of the official state flag.

I write as someone who wishes to follow Jesus, to say again that there is a Gospel reason for changing the flag. True enough, the Bible does not mention the flag and, true enough, changing the flag will not cleanse the racist heart or fill one growling belly or redeem a single lost soul. This, too, is true: gestures matter.

Changing the flag to remove a symbol that is indicative of racial supremacy and racial division would be a gesture of reconciliation and repentance.

Reconciliation and repentance are the true spirit of Jesus.

The "What would Jesus do?" question may not be applicable to every issue we face, but here is an issue to which that question can be posed. Faced with a choice between holding on to a symbol of regional pride that is irrevocably associated with racial supremacy, and letting go of that symbol as an act of genuine reconciliation and repentance, what would Jesus have us do?

Jesus would have us embrace reconciliation and change the flag.

Charles Poole
Jackson

STRANGE?

Editor:

Isn't it strange that we are asked to change the Mississippi flag because it reminds some people of slavery, but at the same time these same persons are accepting \$200,000 of our tax money to memorialize a slave market in Natchez?

Henrietta Miller
Fayette

SCRIPTURE MISUSED

Editor:

I write this because of a perceived misuse of Scripture by several of your contributors over the flag issue. Let me get the flag out of the way first. This is an issue designed to create division and hate. True Christians know this and will handle it like Christ taught us — with prayer and fasting. They will then vote their conviction under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Now for the real problem. In their sincere attempt to get people to think about and understand

the issue of the flag, many of your contributors are quoting 1 Cor. 8. This is a dangerous precedent.

By applying to a secular problem a teaching that Paul was giving to the church at Corinth on how Christian people should work out differences with each other, this teaching can be misapplied to undermine the basic teaching of Christ and give the enemies of Christ another weapon.

If you take this Scripture meant for the church and apply it to our dealings with non-Christians, we start on a downhill slide that says if something offends a non-Christian we should change what Christ taught. 1 Cor. 8 clearly teaches Christians how to work on their relationship with other Christians. We must use a different Scripture when working on our relationship with non-Christians. I would suggest Matt. 5:44-45.

Jim Flake, pastor
Bethlehem Church, Ackerman

KEEP IT FLYING

Editor:

I would like to say about the flag: keep it flying like it is. Things have happened in times past but changing the flag will not change anything but the flag. This flag is a piece of cloth. The words people speak to each other can do more harm than the flag. People today had nothing to do with the war or the flag.

The Lord looks at the heart, not the skin. We should do the same. See Matt. 12:34-37; John 10:16; Matt. 6:14-15; and John 13:34-35. There are a lot of things that hurt people a lot more than the flag.

Charles D. Martin
Batesville

HOMEcomings

Calvary, Silver Creek: June 24; services, 11 a.m., followed by lunch in fellowship hall; James McLemore, former pas-

tor of Calvary, 1969-1972, speaker; John Price, pastor.

Silver Springs, Osyka: April 29; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; dinner on the grounds following morning service; afternoon singing by Carpenter's Wood; Troy Bankston, speaker; Wayne Hall, pastor.

Ramah (Franklin): April 22; worship, 11 a.m.; followed by dinner on the grounds; special music, 1:30 p.m.; Ted Bowlin, guest speaker; Rusty Bowlin, pastor.



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Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Living under God's rule

Matthew 13:24-52

By Lori Clendinning

In 1996, TOR Books published a science fiction/fantasy novel co-authored by actor Richard Dreyfuss and Harry Turtledove. Titled *The Two Georges*, it examines how life in America would be different if the British army had won the American Revolution.

As subjects of King George, the North American Britains do not live in independent states. Since presidents are non-existent in this fantasy, nothing bears their name: no Adams, Cleveland, or Jackson. No monuments to Washington, Jefferson, or Lincoln exist.

The fighting pioneer spirit that helped enflame American ideals and patriotism was smothered by the Redcoats' victory. History never heard of Sam Houston or Davy Crockett. Lewis and Clark never trudged their first step

across the territories. Benjamin Franklin and other vanguards of American inventions never experimented, thus civilization's advances are greatly hampered.

Life under British rule changes everything, according to the authors' imaginations. There is no Bill of Rights over which lawyers might debate; no Constitution to uphold. The king's word is law. Detractors are declared guilty of treason and punished.

How different our lives would be if that scenario was true; if Britain had wrenched America's freedom from her grasp. Today, under the rule of British monarchy, we would be the subjects of Her Royal Majesty, Queen Elizabeth.

Scripture tells us that God allows earthly kings, kingdoms, and political systems to



Clendinning

exist. However, the character of an earthly ruler can either bless or curse his people.

Any political system under man's rule has the potential for corruption. Rulers can obsess over amassing individual fame and fortune or satisfying personal egos.

Too often we blindly rely on the seen, an existing, corruptible, political kingdom, and grant it the devotion and authority that only God deserves. We often forget that all political systems and leaders will ultimately be held accountable to God, the divine ruler of all. Likewise, individuals must decide whether to obey God's terms for righteous living or be rebellious and disobey his mandates.

In this week's lesson, Jesus continues to instruct his disciples regarding God's kingdom. He uses several parables that provide insight into God's sovereignty. Each one demonstrates one principle regarding kingdom living.

The parable of the tares (Matthew 13:24-30) shows

God's long-suffering attitude toward earthly evil and his infinite love for his children. God is omnisciently aware that some will reject his invitation to kingdom living, yet he tarries to allow all who will choose to follow him an opportunity to do so.

Although the tares (evil followers) spring up in the same field (the world) with the wheat (God's followers), he wisely leaves all in place until the harvest (judgment), lest some of the good be destroyed with the evil.

By comparison, if Jesus had destroyed Judas at the first sign of his betrayal, it might have caused other disciples to question and refuse their Master's leadership. Instead, despite knowing what was forthcoming, Jesus allowed Judas to remain among his most trusted followers.

In the mustard seed and the yeast parables (13:31-33), Jesus teaches that God's kingdom may begin with the small and seemingly insignificant, but always ends with colossal results: a miniature seed grows to ten feet tall; a drop of

yeast pervades three days' worth of bread; a baby in a manger changes the course of all mankind.

Hidden treasure and an exquisite pearl are the focuses of the next parables (13:44-46), declaring that God's kingdom is worthy of any sacrifice we make unto self and this world. Although God's riches may be unseen by human eyes, they exist and are a delight for the ones that discover them.

The parable of the net (13:47-50) shows that God is the ultimate judge of evil and good. Kingdom citizens do not judge; only God has the authority to discern what is acceptable.

God's kingdom begins by his rule in our human hearts. When Jesus is Lord and Master of our lives, we enter God's kingdom and look forward in faith to its final establishment. "God's kingdom is an eternal kingdom; his dominion endures from generation to generation" (Daniel 4:3).

Long live the King!

Clendinning is a former newspaper editor and a member of Park Place Church, Pearl.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Leadership

1 Samuel 11:1-12:25

By Jim Burnett

Jesus spent three years teaching and training his disciples to become effective leaders who would take up the mantle of his ministry upon his ascension. Why so much time with just a handful of men? Were there not crowds to teach and thousands to heal?

Yes, but Jesus knew the Father's will would soon nail him to a cross and then his ministry and mission would be left in the hands of the Twelve. Therefore, it was incumbent on him to develop his disciples into effective leaders who could complete the work he began.

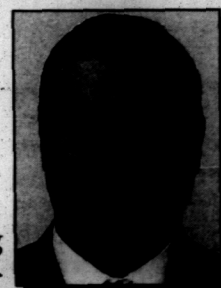
Needed leadership (11:1-3). How about the audacity of Nahash the Ammonite? He offered the elders of Jabesh-Gilead a covenant of peace but it would come at a great physical

expense: the gouging out of their right eyes. Then he told them they had seven days to plead for outside aid.

Israel was obviously experiencing a leadership crisis. Saul had been anointed and appointed king but in name only. The people of Jabesh needed help and needed it fast. They were desperate and without hope.

Nahash in the story represents what Satan is attempting to do to the church today. He tries to bully God's children, beat them up, threaten them, and offer them lousy deals. His expertise is stealing, killing, and destroying.

The church today needs spiritual leaders who are savvy to Satan's schemes and not afraid to confront him in the Lord's strength. We need leaders who realize the devil is not God's equal; he is simply a frustrated,



Burnett

hell bound, fallen angel whose days on this earth are numbered. We need leaders who can and will lead God's people into daily victory through the Word of God, the power of the Spirit, and the blood of Jesus Christ.

Exercising leadership (11:4-8, 11). As Saul was being told of Nahash's threat to the

elders of Jabesh, the Spirit of God came upon him mightily. Consequently, he went into a holy rage, much like the one Jesus experienced when he cleared the moneychangers from the temple. Saul sent out a profound call to arms. The dread of the Lord came upon the people and 330,000 men stepped forward for battle.

There is a time to pray and there is a time to go. In Saul's mind, under the leadership of Holy Spirit, it was time to go. It was no longer appropriate to dialogue with the enemy, grumble and complain about the situation, or call a friend for advice. The situation called for immediate action.

Often churches are crippled by their inability and refusal to respond to God's fresh movement. Windows of divine opportunity open such as the prospects of starting a new ministry, standing against an immoral threat to the community, or catching a new vision from God for the membership.

Unfortunately these windows of opportunity are often slammed shut as a church votes to send the idea to a committee or decides to just sit on the idea and do nothing. This frustrates the spiritual leaders of the church and quenches their spirits.

I thank God for the church I presently pastor, for it is a body of believers truly on mission with God, ready and willing to go where God leads. It is also a church that allows and expects its pastor to exercise leadership.

What if Saul had not rallied this army of 330,000 and defeated the Ammonites? Surely there would have been a lot of one-eyed, humiliated men living in Jabesh-Gilead. How humiliating that would have been! It is equally humiliating today to see what Satan is

doing to many Christians and to many churches.

Much of the harm he is inflicting is due in part to the lack of spiritual leaders who will confront the devil and, out of love, hold God's people accountable for their lifestyles.

Another result of Saul fighting Nahash was that he kept the Ammonites from penetrating deeper into Israel and Judah territory. To be sure, if you give the Devil an inch, he will take a mile.

Affirming leadership (11:14-15). Any doubt of Saul's ability to lead Israel effectively was settled upon his victory over Nahash. Saul was affirmed unanimously by the people as king at Gilgal.

When is the last time you affirmed the spiritual leaders of your church? Have you pledged lately your support for them, your cooperation with them, and your appreciation of them?

Why not tell your ministers and deacons this Sunday that you have confidence in their ability to lead. It will surprise you what a difference it will make.

Burnett is pastor of Raymond Road Church, Jackson.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,



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Please make articles concise. Include the **who, what, when, where** details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of **The Village View** is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

FEBRUARY 1-28, 2001 MEMORIAL CORRECTIONS

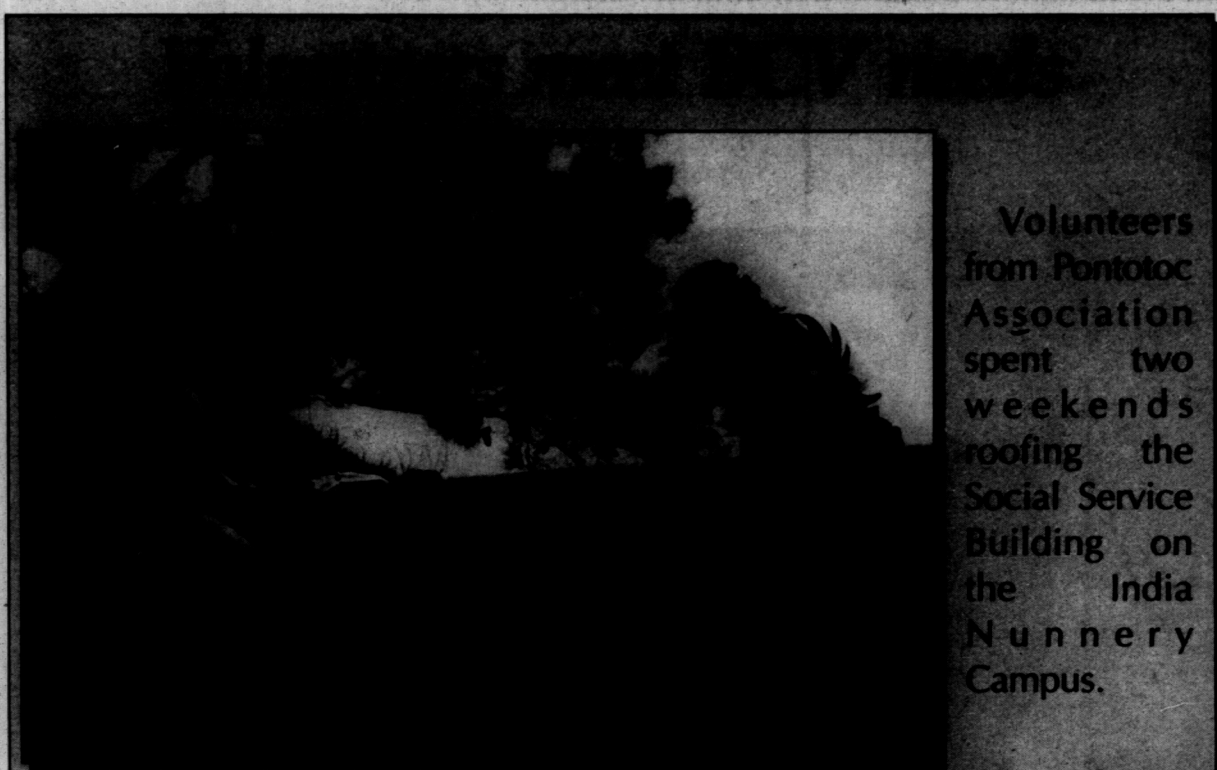
Mrs. Barbara Rimes Burton
Progress Friends
Ruby Mitchell
Mr. & Mrs. Floyd E. Fuqua

FEBRUARY 1-28, 2001 MEMORIALS

Mr. Larry Cook
Mr. & Mrs. Ron K. Phillips
Ms. Dorothy Ward
Mrs. Lorena Cook
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Haddox

Cecil Cooper
Mr. & Mrs. Howard Bridges
Mr. Tom Cecil Cooper
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Thomas
Mr. & Mrs. Ike C. Presley & Family
Mr. Joe Cothran
Mr. & Mrs. Jesse L. Craft
Miley L. Craft
Ms. Sandra E. Boyd
Mr. & Mrs. Heris Crowson
Ms. Billie C. McCully
Mrs. Emma Crum
Crosby Baptist Church
Mrs. Bertha Mae Cummings
Mr. & Mrs. Ellis O. Cummins
Mrs. Patricia Boggan Cummings
Mr. & Mrs. Robert N. Grantham
Lorraine G. Oakman
Roy Cutrer
Mr. & Mrs. Lindsay B. Lampton
Claude Daughdrill
B. Coley Daughdrill Family
Jeff Daughdrill
Mr. Mike Daughdrill

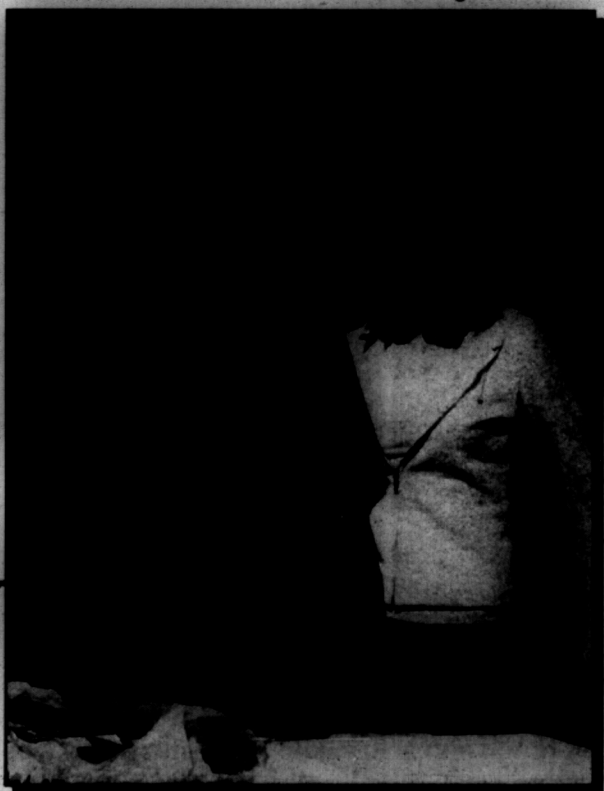
Mr. O. W. Davies
Dr. & Mrs. Neil H. Simmons
Mrs. Jackie Davis
Dr. Raanne Tindle
Mrs. Ruby Davis
Mr. & Mrs. Billy B. Rawls
Cole Matthew Deel
Mr. Robert G. Mullins
Mr. Marshall N. Dowdle
Mr. & Mrs. Truman Aldridge
Janice Downs
Mr. & Mrs. Jewell K. Dykes
Mrs. Jean Drown
Mrs. Fern M. Lyter
Mr. Wayne McWhorter
Mrs. Wanda Dudley
Mr. & Mrs. James M. McIntosh
Emil Dulaney
Mr. & Mrs. J. M. Tidwell
Mrs. Ludie Easom
Mr. & Mrs. Rhen W. Pierce
Rudolph & Faye Spears
Thomas & Martha Spears
Mr. Junior Easter
Mr. & Mrs. W. M. McElroy
Mrs. Ruby Elliott
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Collins
Christopher Knott
Mary Rainey Knott
Nell H. Rainey
Mrs. Joe E. Watford
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Barbee
Mrs. Bobbie M. Barbee
Mrs. Robbie Snell
Ms. Virginia Welch
Mr. Philip Enochs
Mrs. Felicia Taylor
Mrs. Grace Espey
Charles B. Espey & Family
George Espey & Family
H. C. Espey & Family
Sarah Warren & Family
Mrs. Inez Fancher
Mr. & Mrs. David Denson
Don Feasel
Mrs. Beth B. Bounds
Wiley Flanagan
Graeber Brothers Inc.
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Mr. & Mrs. Raymond F. Quinn
Mr. Jessie L. Freney
Rev. & Mrs. James C. Burns
Dr. Julian E. Frye, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Bryant Myatt
Mr. & Mrs. Roger B. Johnson
Alice Steen Simmons
Dr. and Mrs. William B. Thompson
Wayne Gardner
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald E. Carlyle
Mrs. Thelma Gates
Mr. Glenn A. Brumfield
Holden Gray
Ms. Linda Hale
Zelma Greer
Graeber Brothers Inc.
Marvin Griffith
Ms. Maggie L. Mahaffey
Marjorie Guess
Mr. Robert L. Mahon
Bubba Guy
Graeber Brothers Inc.
Mr. R. C. Haley
Mr. & Mrs. Hayes Branscome
Mr. & Mrs. Carl F. DeLoach
Mr. & Mrs. John G. Hardy
Ms. Polly Harlow
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Mr. & Mrs. Jay Gore III
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Mr. & Mrs. James A. Kidd
J. T. Hanaford
Mrs. Curtis L. Johnson
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Mr. & Mrs. Odie L. Shaw
Mr. & Mrs. Larry W. Jones
Mrs. Mary G. Harrison
Mr. & Mrs. Dalton Still
Brenda Still
Mr. & Mrs. M. A. Sanders
Mr. & Mrs. F. W. Haynes
Mr. & Mrs. Jack W. Haynes
Mrs. Ruby Henderson
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene L. Culpepper
Mrs. Bonnie Herring
Lois Butler
Bob & Willie B. Minter
T. A. Hester
The Frank J. Hays Family
Mr. William C. Hewitt
Mr. Kirk Haskins
Mrs. Joelle Hill
Adult I SSC, State Blvd BC-Meridian
State Boulevard Baptist Church
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Anderson
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dew
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmie Mitchell
Mrs. Irene V. Thompson



Volunteers from Pontotoc Association spent two weekends roofing the Social Service Building on the India Nunnery Campus.



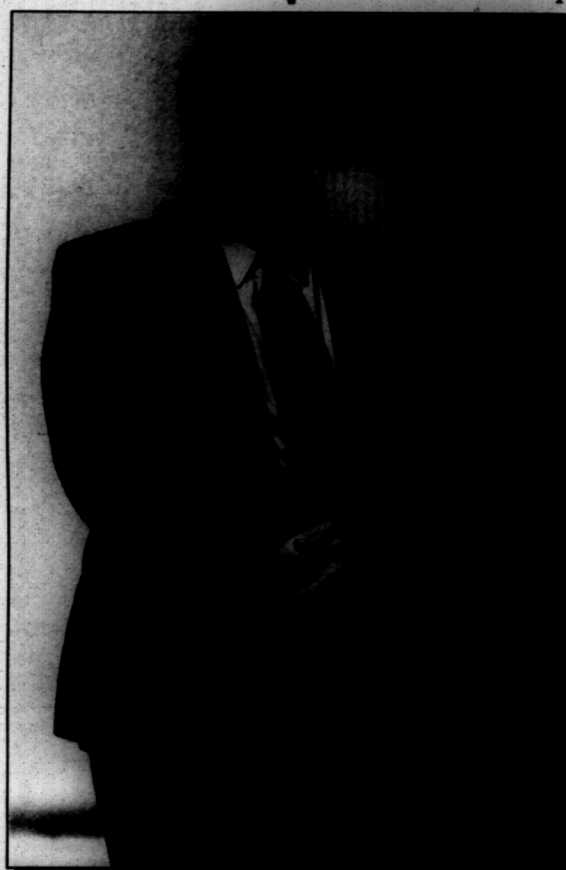
O. D. Hines
Mr. & Mrs. Phillip Hilton
B. F. Hinton
The Brownlees
Katherine Hobson
Graeber Brothers Inc.
Mrs. Addie Hobson
Mrs. Robert Patterson
Fiddler Hoffer
Mr. & Mrs. S. S. Crocker
Curry Holland
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Bill & Deena Barbee
Mr. Walter Barbee
Mrs. Billie J. Holland
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Mr. & Mrs. Trent L. Howell
Mr. Barrett Holmes
Christine Chavers
Jo & Polly Leslie
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy R. Williams
Mrs. Dean Howie
Mr. & Mrs. Dick Catledge
Rodger Hubbard
Mr. & Mrs. David Doss
Mr. & Mrs. Tom W. Doolittle
Johnny Hudson
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Dowdle
Mrs. Huey
Ms. Ellouise Bane
Ethel Huff
Mr. & Mrs. Earl Webb
Eleanor Idom
Ms. Judy H. Lacy
Charles Irby
Mr. & Mrs. George F. Petty
Mrs. Bobbie Jackson
Mr. & Mrs. Lamar Kimbrough
Mrs. L. C. Jackson
Miss Connie Jackson
Ophelia Jennings
Mr. & Mrs. Rodney D. Martin
Hazel Calhoun Johnson
Mrs. Fay C. Campbell
Mrs. Johnson
Mrs. Imogene L. Penn
Mrs. Emma Johnson
Lois Butler
Bob & Willie B. Minter
Mrs. Lola Johnston
Jerry Graham Family
Sanford Holliday Family
Clifton Porter Family
Grace Porter
Mrs. Bennett Jones
Mr. & Mrs. L. W. Guy
Derald, Gerald, Carl Paul
Kirkland
Carrie Kirkland Martin
Mrs. Wanda E. Owen
Nita Jones
Ms. Helen Hancock
James M. "Jim" Jordan
Mr. & Mrs. David Marcus
Mrs. Dorothy Keasler
Mr. & Mrs. Henry F. Peebles Jr.
Clytee S. Kelly
Mr. Charles W. Holmes
Douglas Killgore
Kennedy Kelly
Spot Scarbrough
Betty Siler
Donald Siler
Ed Buchholz
Vicky Newsom
Sue Morris
Verna Daughdrill
Mrs. Charlene King
Mr. Mike Davis & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. Bradford
Mrs. Lena Pearl King
Pelahatchie Baptist Church
Mrs. Robin Harris Lack
Mrs. Lloyd W. Kitchens
Robin Harris Lack
Mrs. Carolyn Woodward
Robin Renee Harris Lack
Mrs. Barbara M. Lack
Doug Mathis
Frank & Evelyn Mathis
Mr. T. J. Ladner
Mrs. Mary H. Sherwood
Mrs. Charlene Lamberson
Fidelis SSC, Seminary BC-Seminary
Bobby Langford
Mr. & Mrs. Billy B. Rawls
Forest Laws, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. Terry Champion
Michael Wilcox Lee, II
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene L. Culpepper
Mr. & Mrs. Norman N. Fountain
Mr. & Mrs. Fred L. Gaddis
Mavalene Perrigin Lee
Ms. Lucille P. McLaurin
Michael Wilcox Lee
Ms. Hope H. Hawkins
Mrs. Geneva M. Lee
Mr. & Mrs. Winston E. Duckworth
Willburn Butler Lenoir
Mr. Charles M. Carnes
Mrs. Erma Letchworth
Herman, Sheron & Chris Coats
Mrs. Esther Lishman
Dr. Raanne Tindle
Mr. E. M. Little
Mr. & Mrs. Ragan Walters
Mrs. Violet Lofton
Concord Baptist Church
Mrs. Edna Long
Ms. Sue Hamilton
Rosemary Miley Madden
Ms. Shirley Pyle
Walter S. Marble
Dr. and Mrs. Cyrus C. Johnson Jr.
Dr. James Mashburn
Ms. Brandy Kelley
Mrs. Mildred Mathews
Mr. & Mrs. E. C. Parsons
Mr. Ed Maxcy
Mr. & Mrs. Max Schiele
Sara Maxie
Galilee Baptist Church
Mr. Bob May
Mr. & Mrs. Billy B. Rawls
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Haddox
Mr. William Rex May
Webster-Montgomery Christian Home Educators
Mrs. Mary Nell May
Mr. & Mrs. Frank W. Barrett
Oliver Lee McCaskill
Mr. & Mrs. Greg Tubertini
Laura McCool
Mr. & Mrs. Michael L. McCool



Lauren Pruitt from Ridgecrest Church, Madison, brought snack and drips for the roofing volunteers.

Ministry emerges from 'just nothing' life

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Steve Drake gripped a 15-inch steel rod in one hand and the throat of his hippie victim in the other.



Drake

Before the bar-brandishing Drake could deliver a possibly fatal scourging to the long-haired hippie who had stolen Drake's girlfriend, an unseen foe tackled him from behind. The scuffle ended with Drake slightly scarred and more than a little lovesick.

The battle-torn, scruffy mess who emerged from the skirmish hardly resembles the suspender-donned Drake who now directs Southern Seminary's supervised ministry program. But nearly 30 years after his beatnik brawl, Drake humbly presents himself as a trophy of God's grace.

In fact, God's deliverance began that same night in 1972 in

the small college town of Carrollton, Ga.

In the aftermath of the battle, Drake had returned home. To what? Not much, in his mind. Drake had lost his girlfriend. He had pursued a fast life of marijuana and alcohol. He had forsaken his Christian upbringing.

Distraught, Drake weeded through the roach clips, liquor bottles, and dirty laundry littering his apartment floor. He collapsed on his bed.

"I was really sad because my life... was just nothing, garbage, trash," Drake said.

He thought he had reached a dead end. But God was just beginning. During the night, Drake awoke under strong conviction. He knew what he needed to do — he fell to his knees.

"I said, 'God, I'm sorry for living in the garbage that you know that I've been living in, but if you still want me, I give myself to you. Amen,'" Drake recounted.

The next morning, he was a changed man. "I felt like I had a second chance. ...All the time I'd been running, [God] had been searching for me," Drake said.

With the previous night's commitment to Christ still fresh on his mind, Drake was on a mission.

"I thought what I really should do was go buy a Bible and begin to read it so I would learn what it is that God wanted from my life," he said.

Only one problem — his 1967 blue Dodge Satellite 262 two-barrel wouldn't cooperate. The car whined in protest as Drake wrenched the ignition. Nothing. Again. Nothing. But nothing was going to stop him either — not even a dead battery.

"I said to myself, 'I haven't been right with God but for about four hours and already the devil is trying to steal this thing away from me,'" Drake said. He acted fast and probably a little foolishly. "I just got up under somebody else's hood and stole their battery [and] put it in my car," he said.

He bought the Bible and then drove to tell the news to his flabbergasted father, who had given up on Drake as a lost cause.

Four days later, Drake gave the battery back. God forgave him. The woman he stole it from didn't.

"She came out and cussed me for a long time," Drake said. "I just tried to be nice to her as I put it back in and drove off."

Several days later, Drake also drove away from his old life of decadence. A job opportunity allowed him to move away from his hippie friends and get a new start in Rome, Ga.

In that north Georgia town, God directed Drake to a church — West Rome Church, led at the time by Jerry Vines, current pastor of First Church, Jacksonville, Fla.

"I said, 'Preacher, I've been on God's payroll for a long time, but I've never lifted a finger to help. I want to punch in and go to work,'" Drake said.

Drake enrolled in God's army, and Christ proceeded to transform his new centurion at the church in Rome.

Though he believed God wanted him in the ministry, Drake feared he might have misinterpreted his happiness in his new Christian life as a true call to the ministry, and he wondered how God could use a butcher with only a high school education.

"I said, 'God, do you really want me to be in the ministry? I'm happy to do it if I know that you want me to do it. But you see, I'm a meat inspector, and I've got a wife now,'" Drake said.

Drake also thought he had another obstacle — his new car, an MGB Roadster.

"I said, 'Of course, if I went into the ministry, I would have to go to college. And you know, Lord, if I went to college I'd have to sell this MGB Roadster. And I just don't know who would want to buy [it],'" Drake said.

While praying, the answer came. The phone rang. Someone wanted to buy the car.

The buyer came over and looked at the car. Then the two drove to the bank. About 45 minutes after the phone call, Drake returned to his prayer with a sold car — and an assurance that God had called him into the ministry.

Village hasn't been same since Jesus saved drunk

BERKOVITSA, Bulgaria (BP) — People once feared the Gypsy Ivan Zahariev. He was a criminal and sometimes vicious when he was drunk.

Looking at Berkovitsa, Bulgaria, the little Gypsy town where he lived, you'd have been hard-pressed to expect more from him.

It's a humble collection of homes strewn up and down a hillside; untreated sewage runs down the middle of dirt streets where in the summer naked children play.

Gypsies are second-class citizens at best in Bulgaria — poor, ill-treated, and scorned, as they are across much of Europe. Berkovitsa, with few jobs and low incomes, reflects this status.

When Ivan Zahariev accepted Christ as his Savior, his life changed.

After Ivan's conversion, International Mission Board missionary Bill Wardlaw taught him the Bible and disciplined him. Ivan, the warehouse worker and drunk, became Ivan, a polished preacher well-versed in the Bible, a leader.

Ultimately, his entire village changed, too.

Today Ivan is pastor of a IMB missionary Paul Ridgway) from a warehouse worker and drunk into a growing Baptist church in polished preacher well-versed in the Bible, a leader. Ultimately, his entire Berkovitsa, population about 3,400. Especially popular are Mike Creswell)

the weekly classes that teach music and Bible stories to about 100 children. Their main teacher is the daughter of Victor Stefkov Georgiev, the town's former mayor.

Georgiev says crime has fallen sharply in Berkovitsa in the past decade. Even smoking and drinking have decreased by 70%.

Last fall ground was broken on three new buildings — a public bathhouse, needed because few houses in town have indoor plumbing; a health center to provide much-needed basic medical care; and a new Baptist church building to replace the tiny rooms the church has long since outgrown.



Not one, but three area mayors came to the church's groundbreaking — unheard of for a Gypsy village.

Ivan is looking far beyond a single church, toward churches for all his people.

Ivan began preaching in a local prison. Response was so positive that the pro-communist government in Bulgaria gave him a permit to preach in other prisons across the country.

His preaching in the "Rom" Gypsy language on radio programs six times a week has brought responses from far and wide.

In the town of Danyanovo, believer Natalie Kamenova recalls how excited she and her sister became two years ago when she heard a Gypsy-language broadcast — Ivan was talking about "New Man."

At the time, they missed getting the response address but the next week wrote it down and sent a letter.

Two weeks later, Ivan came to visit.

As a result, a Bible study started. Now there's a fledgling church, meeting upstairs in a house once owned by Joel Chiron, a French Baptist missionary who works with Ivan in the area.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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J IBWA NBOZ UIJOHT UP
TBZ BOF UP KVFHA PG
ZPV; CVU IA UIBU TAOU
NA JT USVA; BOF J TQABL
UP UIA XPSMF UIPTA
UIJOHT XIJDI J IBWA
IABSF PG IJN.

KPIO AJHIU: UXAOUZ-TJY

Clue: I = H

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Four: Ten.